(कुमारी शैलजा) : (क) से (ग) सूचना एकत्र की जा रही है और सभा पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

दक्षिण भारत हिन्दी प्रचार-सभा में दीक्षांत समारोह

5097. श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : क्या मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री ने फरवरी/मार्च में दक्षिण भारत हिन्दी प्रचार सभा में दीक्षांत भाषण दिया था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो दीक्षांत समारोह में कितने लोग उपस्थित थे और कितने लोग पिछले तीन वर्षों के दौरान दक्षिण भारत हिन्दी प्रचार सभा, द्वारा आयोजित की गई विभिन्न परीक्षाओं में उत्तीर्ण हुए थे;

(ग) क्या उस समारोह के अवसर पर सभा ने माननीय मंत्री महोदय के समक्ष हिन्दी के विकास हेतु विशेष सहायता दिए जाने की मांग रखी थी; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है; और इस संबंध में केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है?

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय (शिक्षा विभाग और संस्कृति विभाग) में उपमंत्री (कुमारी शैलजा) : (क) और (ख) जी, हां। वर्ष 1993 में सभा की परीक्षाओं में उत्तीर्ण 12700 उम्मीदवारों ने उक्त दीक्षान्त समारोह में व्यक्तिगत रूप से अपनी डिग्रियां प्राप्त कीं। 1991,1992 और 1993 के दौरान विभिन्न परीक्षाओं में उत्तीर्ण उम्मीदवारों की संख्या क्रमशः 15448, 25395 और 27266 है।

(ग) जी, नहीं।

(घ) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

AGE OF ADMISSION OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

5098. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) Whether experts have pointed that in terms of chronological age a child at the time of entry to pre-school should be between 2-4 years old;

(b) if so, whether at present in most of the cities m India children are coming to pre-schod at the age of 2-1/2 years;

(c) whether the National Policy of Education, 1986, specifies ' the elemental school age ranging from 6-14 years but actual entry age of almost all the States barring some eastern States it is 5 plus years;

(d) whether experts have stressed that strict policy of age should be followed for entry in schools in future;

(e) if so, whether early age of preschool effects the child in his development;

(f) if so, whether National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCE-RT) have taken up this issue; and

(g) if so, what are the steps Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE. MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPTT. OF EDUCATION AND DEPTT. OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA) : (a) Some experts-are of the opinion that in terms of choro-tiological, age a child at the time df entry to pre-sdbool should be between 3-4 years old.

(b) lt is true that in many cities children are being taken into pre-school at the early age of $2^{1/2}$ years.

(c) National Policy on Education recommends that the age for entry to elementary school should be six years. However, in many States entry age is still *5+*.

(d) and (e) Many experts have opined that if a child comes into pre-school-too early and is subjected to a formal curri culum, it is likely to have deterimental eflfects on the childs development. They have therefore suggested that for pre school, entry age should be $3^{1/2}$ years and for Class-I in primary school, it should he 6 years and above.

(f) and (g) The National Council, of Educational Research and Training (NCE-RT) has conducted seminars in many cities

for principals, parents and teachers to emphasise tile need for a more Child Centred Early Childhood Ednhition Programme, NCERT has also brought out a document entitled 'Minimum specilications for preschools' and other resource material for teachers and children. Recommendations of the seminar and other material developed by NCERT have been distributed widely and sent to all States and Union Territories.

Setting up of Youth Development Centres

5099. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DTEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Governmet have decided to set up Youth Development Centres in rural parts of the country;

(b) if so, what are the details of such centres and the objectives for which they are to be set up; and

(c) how many such Youth Development Centres are to be set up in Bihar with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT QF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK) : (a) A new scheme of Youth Development Centres is under consideration of the Government.

(b) The objective of the Scheme is to provide an intermediate tier between the youth clubs at the village level and the Nehru Yuva Kendra at the District level. Youth Development Centres are expected to provide the rural Youth with opportuni ties for full participation in the develop mental and recreational activties. Thera will be a Youth Development Centre for neariy 10 villages each. It is proposed that the scheme will be operated through Nehru Yuva Kettdra Sangathan.

(c) Exact number of Youth Develop ment centres in Bihar to be set up has not yet been decided.

Child marriage in Rajaithan

5100 SHRI SANJAY DALMIA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the number of child marriages is going on unabeted in Rajasthan despite it being a cognizable offence in terms of the Sharda Act; and

(b) whether in view of the State Gov-enunent's utter ineffectiveness to tackle the situation, what steps Centre propose to take to put an end to this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STAtE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (SMT. BASAVARAJESWARI) :

(a) and (b) Government is aware of the fact that child marriages are still prevalent in certain parts of the country including Rajasthan. The practice of child marriage is deeply embedded amongst certain sections of society. The elimination of such deep rooted social maladies cannot only be the result of enforcement action, but is also dependent upon a range of other social and economic developmental inputs, like education, awareness generation social and economic empowerment. Govern-ment of India has attempted to generate awareness on such issues through various modes; in particular, camps are being *organised un*ter the Awareness Generation Programme implanented through non-Gov-ernmental organisations/institations. Assistance is also being given for organising legal literacy programmes and other activities for o-eating awareness about women's status and rights. The State Government of Rajasthan hais also taken a number of steps to eliminate this practice, lAn anti-child ruarraige campaign is launched every year to generate social awareness and for taking prompt legal action when report of solemnisation of such marriages are received.

***Applications* for B. Sc. Nursing Couse in Sir S. S. L. Hospital Varanasi**

5101. SHRI T. A. MOHAMMED SAQHY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number df applications of nurses forwarded by the offuce of Medical Superiiitendeflt of Sir Sunder Lal Hospital , Varanafti for *entrance* to B.Sc. (Nursing) College of Nursing, Post-Graduate Insti-